

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9982

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CHEROKEE

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR EG US MASS MARR SA

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH FAHMY

1. YESTERDAY AFTERNOON FAHMY TELEPHONED TO ASK THAT I COME TO SEE HIM LATER IN THE EVENING AT HIS APARTMENT. HE HAD SOMETHING URGENT TO DISCUSS WITH ME. SUBJECT ON HIS MIND WAS ARMS.

2. PRESIDENT SADAT, FAHMY SAID, IS DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE "LEAKS" ON ARMS FOR EGYPT AND WHY HE HAS AS YET HAD NO REPLY TO HIS ARMS REQUEST. ALTHOUGH THE PRESIDENT WANTS TO SEE ME BEFORE MY DEPARTURE, HE HAD TWICE YESTERDAY TELEPHONED FAHMY TO INSTRUCT THAT HE CALL ME IMMEDIATELY TO DISCUSS THE SUBJECT. FIRST, THERE HAD BEEN THE LEAK ABOUT THE C-130S. THIS WAS FOLLOWED IMMEDIATELY THEREAFTER BY A LEAK ABOUT THE ENTIRE GAMUT OF ARMS THAT EGYPT HAS REQUESTED, INCLUDING F-5S. A STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN, WHEN QUESTIONED, HAD SPOKEN VAGUELY ABOUT NO ARMS SALES TO EGYPT WITHOUT CONGRESSIONAL CONSULTATION. THE PRESIDENT DID NOT KNOW WHAT THIS WAS INTENDED TO MEAN. ARE WE NOW CONSULTING WITH THE CONGRESS AND WHAT IS THE STATUS OF HIS REQUEST? WITH SOME IMPATIENCE, THE PRESIDENT

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HAD NOTED THAT HE HAD BEEN PROMISED ARMS FOR WELL OVER

A YEAR AND A HALF, BUT THAT WE HAD ALWAYS RENEGED. IS THIS GOING TO BE ANOTHER SUCH OCCASION?

3. APART FROM THE OVERALL QUESTION OF ARMS, FAHMY CONTINUED, THE PRESIDENT IS EXERCIZED ABOUT OUR REQUEST TO TERMINATE EGYPTIAN AIR FORCE TRAINING ON SAUDI F-5S. AT OUR REQUEST, HE HAD INDEED SUSPENDED SUCH TRAINING. HE NOW FINDS, HOWEVER, THAT THERE IS CONSIDERABLE DISQUIET IN THE EGYPTIAN AIR FORCE. AS A RESULT OF HIS POLICIES, THE SOVIETS HAVE STOPPED SPARE PARTS AND ENGINE OVERHAUL FOR HIS MIG INVENTORY. EGYPTIAN AIRCRAFT ARE HARDLY FLYING AND HIS PILOTS ARE IDLE. HE IS GETTING SECURITY REPORTS OF RESULTANT DISCONTENT IN THE AIR FORCE. IN HIS JUDGMENT, THIS SITUATION IS GETTING DANGEROUS. HE FEELS HE MUST DO SOMETHING, AND QUICKLY, TO STILL SUCH DISSATISFACTION. SINCE HE HAS NO OTHER MEANS TO DO SO, HE INTENDS TO RESUME EGYPTIAN TRAINING ON SAUDI F-5S. THE PRESIDENT ASKED THAT PRESIDENT FORD AND YOU BE APPRISED OF HIS CONCERN AND HIS INTENDED ACTION.

4. I REMINDED FAHMY THAT YOU HAD EARLIER TOLD HIM WE WOULD TRY TO WORK OUT SOMETHING ON ARMS AFTER THE SECOND SINAI AGREEMENT HAS BEEN FULLY IMPLEMENTED. I DID NOT KNOW THE SOURCE OF THE RECENT RASH OF PRESS STORIES, BUT DEPARTMENT PRESS SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENT THAT CONGRESSIONAL CONSULTATION WOULD BE NEEDED IS ABSOLUTELY CORRECT. I EMPHASIZED TO FAHMY THAT THE PRESIDENT AND HE SHOULD BE SURE THAT THE MATTER IS VERY MUCH ON YOUR MIND AND THAT THERE IS A GENUINE DESIRE TO MOVE AHEAD. BUT THE PRESIDENT AND HE SHOULD ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT THE PROBLEM OF CONGRESSIONAL REACTION IS VERY REAL. APART FROM PRO-ISRAELI ELEMENTS WHO MIGHT OPPOSE ARMS SALES TO EGYPT, THERE IS STRONG BODY OF CONGRESSIONAL OPINION THAT IS SEEKING TO RESTRICT ALL US ARMS SALES ANYWHERE. THUS, IT IS NOT MERELY A MATTER OF INFORMING THE CONGRESS, BUT ONE OF BRINGING KEY CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS AND COMMITTEES AROUND TO UNDERSTAND THE NEED FOR SUCH SALES TO EGYPT. HE COULD BE CONFIDENT THAT WE WILL MOVE AS FAST AS CIRCUMSTANCES PERMIT, BUT THE PROCESS CANNOT BE RUSHED. (I HAVE JUST
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RECEIVED STATE SECTO 03008, WHICH I WILL DELIVER TO FAHMY TODAY.)

5. ON THE F-5 TRAINING PROGRAM IN SAUDI ARABIA, I WOULD OF COURSE REPORT THE PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS, BUT I URGED THAT THE TRAINING PROGRAM NOT BE RESUMED. IT IS CERTAIN TO BECOME KNOWN AND CAN ONLY MAKE OUR JOB OF GETTING CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL FOR ARMS SALES TO EGYPT MORE DIFFICULT. WHILE I COULD NOT COMMENT ON REPORTED

DISCONTENT IN THE EGYPTIAN AIR FORCE, I WONDERED IF THERE
IS NOT SOME OTHER WAY IN WHICH THAT PROBLEM MIGHT BE
MANAGED. FAHMY SAID THE PRESIDENT DOES NOT SEEM TO
THINK SO AND WANTS US TO KNOW THAT HE SEES NO ALTER-
NATIVE BUT TO RESUME THE F-5 TRAINING PROGRAM IN
SAUDI ARABIA. EILTS

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